



82ND "ALL AMERICAN" AIRBORNE DIVISION



82ND ELBE BRIDGEHEAD LAST IN EUROPE

George C Melahn 505th PIR

INTRODUCING OUR NEW BRIGADIER GENERAL IRA P SWIFT

New Ast C.G. receives Brigadier Star in suprise ceremony

Brig. Gen. Ira P. Swift, Asst Div. Commander since December, received the coveted star symbolic of a general officer in a surprise ceremony before the 82d Airborne Division Field Hqs. on April 14. The new insignia of rank was pinned on Gen. Swift's uniform by the Division Commanding General, Major Gen. Gavin and Brig. Gen. Francis Andrew March, Div. Arty. Commander. About 1:30 in the afternoon on April 14, Gen. Swift, then Col. Swift was called back to the C. P. where a formation of Div. Hqs. and Staff personnel waited for the surprise ceremony. His date of rank is officially 20 April 1945.

The new Asst. Commanding General has been Asst. Div. Commander since early in December 1944. He was active in both the Ardennes and German operations. Moving into the Bulge operation a few days after joining the division the General says he was very much impressed with the self reliance and esprit de corps of the Airborne Soldier. "They seem to move forward and dive into a job more readily than the regular infantry I had come in contact with," said the tall, greying veteran of the 2nd Armored Division. "Soldiers in the Second Armored often compared their attached infantry units to Paratroopers. They always praised the aggressiveness of the Airborne Skytroopers and expressed a strong desire to fight with them." (This respect and mutual admiration as fighting men between the 82d and the 2nd Armored may date back as far as Ft Benning training days when the 504th and 505th slugged it out with the 2nd Armored in Phoenix City's famed Cotton Fish Camp and other local brawling areas.) After joining the Division General Swift soon was able to see the subject of Armored admiration in action. "My observations in the bitter fighting of the Bulge were that the Skytroopers seem to have more self reliance as individuals." The 82d Airborne soldiers seem to have a double Esprit de Corps, according to Gen. Swift. In addition to great unit pride in the oldest and most distinguished Airborne Div. each and every Airborne soldier seems to fight a little harder because he's a paratrooper. The older Glidermen are just a indignat if anyone suggests that they are not every bit as good as the paratroopers so the Esprit goes both ways. The men are convinced that they not only belong to the world's greatest Division but that they are individually cut from the pattern of the world's best in fighting men. Gen. Swift, himself is a fully qualified jumper with 6 jumps to his credit. He took his Parachute Training in France shortly after returning from the Belgium Operation because he wanted "to do everything the men are asked to do."

Gen. Swift's whole army career has been that way. Graduating from the United States Military Academy at West Point on the tail end of the last war, Gen. Swift bridged the period between the two world wars with the usual peacetime tour of duty throughout the United States and Possessions. He spent three years in the Philippines. The lanky 47 year old General attended Cavalry School, the Command and General Staff School, and the Army War College before joining the War Dept General Staff in Washington from 1939 to 1942. In Feb. 1942 he was promoted to full Colonel. That same year Gen. Swift joined the Ninth Armored Div. as a regimental commander where he served until 1943, when he went with the General Staff to London as Deputy G-3 of the 1st U. S. Army Group. In London, the General helped lay the plans for the invasion of Normandy, later moving to France to plan subsequent operations. In Oct., 1944, Gen. Swift was back in the harness as an armored regimental commander, this time with the 2nd Armored Division. He was with old "Blood and Guts" Division when they cracked the Siegfried Line. In this campaign the General received the Silver Star for Gallantry in Action during the 2nd Armored's drive toward the Ruhr in the Basewiler sector. He also was awarded the Bronze Star for heroic action during the seizure, occupation and defense of the hard-won Eder area in Western Germany.

The General holds the Legion of Merit for outstanding service in the preparation of important legislative plans affecting the organization of the army. Most recent of his numerous decorations is the French Croix de Guerre presented by Gen. Charles DeGaulle for exceptional services in battle rendered in the beginning of the Operations to liberate France.

The new Asst Commanding General, familiar to us all for his constant supervision of the Preparatory Training Program in France, likes to get down to the smallest units where he can see firsthand what goes on with the men who really fight the war. This attitude both in and out of battle is consistent with the custom of Division leaders from the Commanding General down, and may partially explain what Gen. Swift calls the extreme mobility and Espre De Corps of the "All American" Troopers.

Gen. Swift's interests on the home front are well taken care of by his wife Gertrude and their two daughters Barbara 19 and Joanne 15. W.F.D.

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Generals 3 - Brigadier General Francis A. March, Division Artillery commander and Major General James M. Gavin, 82 Division commander pin the coveted Star on the Asst. Division commander Brigadier General Ira P. Swift.

GENERAL SWIFT Fourteenth 82nd General Officer

Gen. Swift is fourteenth in the long and distinguished list of Generals boasted by the 82d "All American" in its 3 years since reactivation. Beginning with four star General Omar N. Bradley, Division Commanders were in order: Bradley, who organized the Division, Major Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway, who commanded through the campaigns in Sicily, Italy and Normandy, and

"SLIM JIM"



Major General James M. Gavin

Major Gen. James M. Gavin has commanded the 82d in the Bulge, the Rhine Sack, and Central Germany.

Asst. Division Commanders have included Gen. Ridgway under Gen. Bradley, Brig. Gen. Don. F. Pratt, who later went to the 101st and was killed in Normandy, Maj. Gen. Wm M. "Bud" Miles, now commanding the 17th Airborne, Brig. Gen. Charles L. Keeran, Maj. Gen. Gavin, and Brig. Gen. Swift.

Artillery Generals were headed by Maj. Gen. Joseph M. Swing, now commanding the 11th Airborne in the Pacific, Maj. Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, commanding the 101st Airborne, and Brig. Gen. Francis A. March, the present Artillery General.

Colonels who left the Division to become Generals elsewhere are Brig. Gen. Steward Cutler, now with Allied Airborne Army, Brig. Gen. Claudius M. Easley, former 325th commander, Brig. Gen. Ralph P. "Doc" Eaton, Chief of Staff with the 18th Airborne Corps, and Brig. General Pope Asst Div. Commander of the 86th Division.

Lt. Gen. Johnathan "Skinny" Wainwright, hero of Bataan, was in the 82d during the last war as Lt. Gen. T. C. H. Lee. Eisenhower's Deputy and Com. Z Commander in the E. T. O. They were G-3 and G-2 respectively.

In Gavin, Taylor, Swing and Miles, the 82d as the first airborne division boasts prior rights on the Commanding Generals of every airborne division which has seen combat to date. Add to this "Mr. Airborne" Maj. Gen. Ridgway, commanding the 18th Airborne Corps, and the 82d can take great pride in its virtual domination of field command in the Airborne game. W.F.D.

Military funeral for Nazi atrocity victims

by Vernon C. Havener

The citizens of Ludwigslust today gave "proper and reverent burial" to 200 slave laborers who died of starvation in a concentration camp four miles north of their town.

The entire population of this town of 10,000 on the Mecklenburg plain attended the services, which were conducted by chaplains of the 82d Airborne Division.

All day yesterday, men of the town dug graves six feet deep in the sandy soil of a tree-shaded park and carried bodies of the dead from the concentration camp. There were 1000 bodies in all. Eight hundred had been buried in a woods, in common graves. Two hundred others now rest in Christian graves in Ludwigslust.

The citizens of Ludwigslust marched along four long rows of graves and looked at the bodies. The dead were shrouded in sheets, but their gaunt, distorted faces were bared for all to see. Most of the Germans, hats in hand at the order of GIs, did not appear greatly moved by the grim sight. A few women cried; most did not.

Five Wehrmacht generals and other German officers marched along the long rows, too. Many avoided looking at the twisted, gaunt bodies. Many looked, but apparently saw nothing; death to them was a commonplace.

Yesterday, when civilians were escorted through the concentration camp, they were not so stoic. Many women fainted at the sights and smells. Many men were profoundly affected by the brick building with only straw for floors, the barbed wire enclosures, the unbelievable squalor that surrounded the dead. The living and the half-alive were worst: 700 horribly emaciated slave laborers were taken to hospitals from the camp. Already, 57 have died. Many more are yet to die.

At the sound of funeral music from the 82d Airborne Division band, civilians, one at the head



10,000 Strong they turned out the Citizens of Ludwigslust. Citizens of every profession to dig the graves and view the bodies of those they persecuted. With them too, came 5 Wehrmacht Generals and many other German officers, officers of an army that had sanctioned this great crime against justice, decency, humanity.

Discharge The Redeployment and Reassignment System

Other than payday, or sweating out the chow line, what is more important to the average GI than the point system? I think it would be safe to say that the very thought of it takes his breath away, and since he thinks of it all the time it's a wonder he breathes at all. I've checked around, tested here and there, and a guy with more than 100 points is a rare as a synagogue in Berlin. These high point guys are really on the varsity, they can't miss. If I could score for a hundred points I'd gladly spend any weekend you say in bed with a wet walrus. All this is a little vague, isn't it; but we have a few moments, haven't we? But to continue this little monograph: a fellow with eighty-five points has a chance to be discharged. Once more only slower . . . he has a chance to be discharged. He has a chance to get out, to allez, parti, via, or anything you want to call it. It's out of this world and I know it, but the Army has come out flat-footed and said so.

ENTERTAINMENT CORNER SPECIAL SERVICE ROUND UP

A long list of Stage, screen, and sports celebrities has entertained "All Americans" in the lulls between missions.

Variety has always been the spice of Vaudeville and the French, G. I., and U. S. O. shows presented by Special Service as a supplement to the ever popular "ack-ack" were no exception. The celebrated games that graced the prosodium ran the gauntlet all the way from the knobby knees of the ludicrous old ballplayer, Onkel Frankie Frisch, to the curvaceous calves of the ballroom slayer, lovely Marlene Dietrich. Onkel Frank, the old Fordham Flash, dropped in on us with a surprise visit with the baseball troupe including baseball stars "Bucky" Walters, "Dutch" Leonard, Mel Ott, and sportscaster Roy Stockton. They came to the 82d first and they'll remember it longest, judging by their enthusiasm both during their visit and the mail that is still dropping into the Special Service Office on occasion. Incidentally, all four are going great in the current baseball season. "Dutch" Leonard pitched and won the season opener for the Senators and has been fanning the corners with his knuckleball ever since "Bucky" Walters as usual will win his 20 games for Cincinnati. He didn't finish the opener but, neither did he lose it as the Reds went on to

beat Frankie Frisch's Pirates in 11 innings. "Bucky" writes that he was recently thrown out of a ball game for arguing. It was the second time in 17 years of professional baseball. "Must'a been Frisch's influence during our tour," he says.

Master Melvin, who breaks a record every time he goes to bat, is enjoying another hot season. This year is Ott's 20th Anniversary in the big leagues and his 20th season with the same club, a record which beats "Gabby" Hartnett's 19 with the Cubs. He is leading the home run parade and punching out one of the National League's top batting averages as player-manager of the league-leading New York Giants.

Manager Frisch is bewailing a few bad breaks, but according to Walters, he has a good club and they'll be right in there at the finish.

From bat to bow is a long jump but so was the distance the 82d troopers traveled between visits by the ball players and world famed violinist Jascha Heifitz who brought culture to a small group of Airborne cut-throats on the stage of the only big theatre left in Cologne. His selection was as varied as was his wit, which kept our music lovers guessing.

Another prominent entertainer was Army Private and ex-screen

star Mickey Rooney, who caught a pie in one of the funniest acts since Buster Keaton made Lemon Meranque a household favorite. Morbid Mickey was featured in 2 shows of high grade G. I. talent brought during our stay in France.

Last and foremost on our bright list of G. I. favorites is the "one-and-only Legs" "See what the boys in the back room will have"

Dietrich, whose spangled Shape and Wiskey tenor wowed the troopers from stem to stern and back again. The fabulous Dietrich, after month of trying, capoled her bookers into a 2 night stand. She says she's an 82d rooter from way back, and we all willingly admit that the feeling is 100% mutual. Her legs are just about the most famous in the troopers jump boots, but "why cover all that up" was the conversation on Marlene's footwear. Voted "the shape we'd like most to drape a parachute on", the fabulous Dietrich will live forever in the annals of "All American" entertainers. W. F. D.

"ALL AMERICAN" ENTERTAINER

Trouper Dietrich

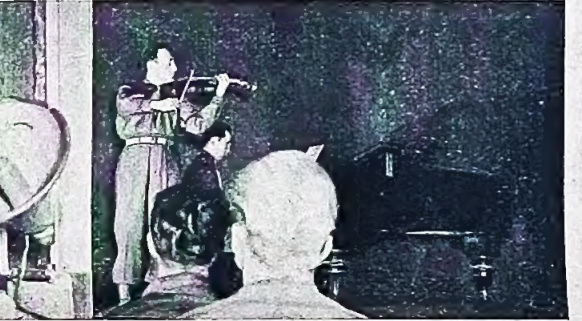
"See what the boys in the jump boots will have"



THE BALL TEAM - Gavin, Walters, Ott, Leonard, Frisch



The "G-I's Favorite" Mickey Rooney



Heifitz fiddles while Cologne Burns

CHAPLAINS ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF LUDWIGSLUST

by Major P. H. Woods

We are assembled here today before God and in the sight of man to give a proper and reverent burial to the victims of atrocities committed by armed forces in the name and by the order of the German Government. These 200 bodies were found by the American army in a concentration camp 4 miles north of the city of Ludwigslust.

The crimes here committed in the name of the German people and by their acquiescence were minor compared to those to be found in concentration camps elsewhere in Germany. Here there were no gas chambers, no crematoria; these men of Holland, Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and France were simply allowed to starve to death. Within 4 miles of your comfortable homes 4,000 men were forced to live like animals, deprived even of the food you would give to your dogs. In three weeks 1,000 of these men were starved to death; 800 of them were buried in pits in the nearby woods. These 200 who lie before us in these graves were found piled 4 & 5 feet high in one building and lying with the sick and dying in other buildings.

"The world has long been horrified at the crimes of the German nation; these crimes were never clearly brought to light until the armies of the United Nations overran Germany. This is not war as conducted

by the international rules of warfare. This is murder such as is not even known among savages.

"Though you claim no knowledge of these acts you are still individually and collectively responsible for these atrocities, for they were committed by a government elected to office by yourselves in 1933 and continued in office by your indifference to organized brutality. It should be the firm resolve of the German people that never again should any leader or party bring them to such moral degradation as is exhibited here. "It is the custom of the United States Army through its Chaplains Corps to insure a proper and decent burial to any deceased person whether he be civilian, or soldier, friend or foe, according to religious preference. The Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces has ordered that all atrocity victims be buried in a public place, and that the cemetery be given the same perpetual care that is given to all military cemeteries. Crosses will be set up in memory of these deceased. Protestant, Catholic and Jewish prayers will be said by Chaplains Wood, Hannan and Wall of the 82d Airborne Division for these victims as we lay them to rest and commit them into the hands of our Heavenly Father in the hope that the world will not again be faced with such barbarity.



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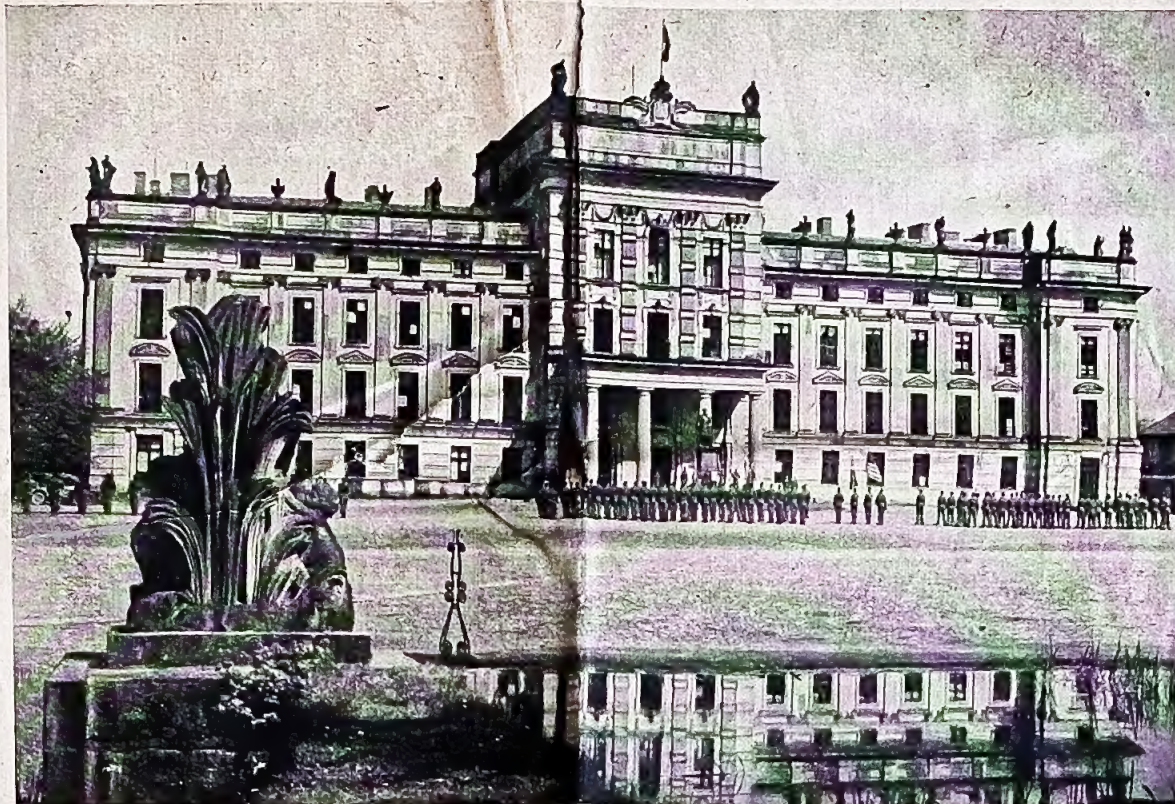
that is, excepting the jug of wine. It's still kicking around. The revised version goes, "A silver star, a purple heart, and thou (those eighty-five points) beside me, (or better still, on the service record) singing in the wilderness (Germany)."

Everybody can't sing though. There's a bunch of guys with only forty, sixty, or seventy-five points. They're as cheerful as a night in an artificial limb factory. The best they can hope for is that the Army blossoms out with a whole batch of new stars. The battle of the Rue Pigalle, or the campaign of the Via Roma, for example. With a break like this many more could join the happy throng of eighty-five points. On the other hand, it won't be so bad. According to the National Geographic, India abounds with interesting and colorful flora and fauna. The flora, or is it fauna, absolutely lurk all about Burma. They tell me that you can't walk down the street without bumping into some of it. There might be some of you who don't give a damn about fauna, and even some who find flora execrable (go look up the meaning yourself, I had to), but then there's no pleasing some people. At any rate, which ever group you find yourself in, I'm sure that everything will work out just peachy.

V-E DAY



The Last Mile —
This is the story of the most unbelievable sight in two years of combat for the skytroopers of the 82d All American Airborne Division.
Through Sicily, Italy, Normandy, Holland, Belgium, and all over western and northern Germany the troopers fought, but never in that abundance of unforgettable experiences did anything stamp a deeper impression than the surrender of the 21st German Army at the Bleckede Bridgehead in north Germany. Once in Sicily, 20,000 beaten Italians had surrendered to the All Ame-



The American Flag flies over the palace of the Herzog von Mecklenburg-Schwerin — 82 Airborne Div. C.P. — Here Surrender Papers were signed —

MEETING THE RUSSIANS



INFORMAL — All Along the front "Troopers" met the Russian Doughboys and Tankers.



FORMAL — Anglo-American Honor Guard Passes in Review for Russian, British and American Generals.



Serving



Tasting



Testing



General Souprounoff plays Host to General Gavin at Russian Feast

Caucasian Shashlik — Russian American relations A No. 1!!



The Last Mile (continued)
...ican Paratroopers, but then the Germans had laughed, "Italians were but little children beside the super race". Now, almost two years later, the same 82d Division once more sees a mass surrender through its battle tested lines. This time it's a German surrender, not a paltry 20,000, but an estimated 150,000, jamming the roads in the disorganized hordes of a beaten army, a beaten people; the same type disorganized stampede that had brought on German sneers two years earlier when the people of another beaten dictator could no longer see honor, hope, or salvation in death and destruction.



YESTERDAY — SLAVERY

TODAY — FREEDOM

TOMORROW — HOME